

Message Text

SECRET

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: NEA/ARN:TJCAROLAN:PDW

APPROVED BY: NEA/ARN:MDRAPER

NEA:AGRIFFIN

S/S-O:MTANNER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 103893 TOSEC 110358

EXDIS MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOR SAUNDERS

FOLLOWING REPEAT AMMAN 2311 ACTION SECSTATE INFO JIDDA

29 APRIL 76.

QUOTE

S E C R E T AMMAN 2311

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON FROM PICKERING

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR MASS JO US SA

SUBJECT: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE -TALK WITH CROWN PRINCE

1.I TALKED AGAIN WITH CROWN PRINCE ABOUT NOON APRIL 29 I TOLD
HIM THAT I FELT IT IMPORTANT THAT I CONFIRM AGIN WITH HIM MY
IMPRESSION ABOUT WHETHER SAUDIS HAD BEEN REASSURED BY HIM THAT
DEAL WAS NOT RPT NOT YET "ABROGATED" (SEE REFTTEL) HASSAN CAME

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BACK IMMEDIATELY SAYING "THAT TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY I MADE

THAT POINT CRYSTAL CLEAR. WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED" HE SAID " SAUDIS WERE BADLY SHAKEN BY THE IMPRESSION THAT KING HAD ABROGATED THE DEAL AND WAS AT THE VERY MOMENT OPENING UP TE SOVIET OPTION" HE CONTINUED THAT AFTER I TOLD THEM THAT NO ABROGATION WOULD OCCUR BEFORE THE DEADLINE APRIL 30 THEY SEEMED GREATLY REVLIIVED AND WHEN I LEFT THEM THERE WERE IN EXCELLENT SPIRITIS".

2. HASSAN ALSO ADDED THAT AFTER HIS DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR PORTER IN JIDDA HE CALLED FAHD AGAIN FROM MEDINA HE DESCRIBED HIS CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR TO FAHD. HE SAID THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE SAIDIS WHO WANTED HIM TO SEE PORTER SINCE FAHD HAD CALLED HIM EARLIER IN THE DAY URGING THAT HE MEET WITH AMBASSDOR PORTER (I LEFT HIM WITH THAT IMPRESSION) IN THE TELEPHONE CALL FROM MEDINA FAHD WAS URGED BY HASSAN TO MEET WITH PORTER AND HASSAN TOLD FAHD THAT IT NOW DEPENDED ON THE GOOD SENSE OF THE TWO KINGS WORKING CLOSELY WITH

THE UNITED STATES TO GET THE DEAL WORKED OUT IN TIME. HASSAN BELIEVES THAT FAHD IS NOW IMPRESSED BY THE URGENCY OF SEEING AMBASSADOR PORTER.

3. HASSAN ASKED ME ABOUT WHEN FAHD WOULD BE SEEING PORTER. AFAINST THE BACKGROP OF VARIOUS CABLES WE HAVE RECEIVED THIS MONRING, I TOLD HASSAN THAT PORTER WOULD WANT TO SEE FAHD AS SOON AS HE COULD. HOWEVER THEIR WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT AN ARRANGEMENT TO MEET MIGHT NOT COME UNTIL A FEW DAYS AFTER THE DEADLINE. IN THIS CONVERSATION I WAS EXPLORING WITH WASHINGTON THE POSSIBILITY OF KEEPING THE CONTRACTS ALIVE UNTIL WE COULD GET AN ANSWER FROM FAHD. (I DID THIS BOTH TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR MY LATER APPRACH AND ALSO TO SEE IF HASSAN WOULD RAISE THE "MAY 2 TRIP TO SYRIA PLOY" WHICH HE MENTIONED TO AMBASSADOR PORTER. HE DID NOT MENTION THAT TRIP AND WE ARE NOT AWARE OF A PENDING TRIP TO SYRIA BY THE KING IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. BUT WE PRESUME THAT THE KING MIGHT START ON THE SOVIET ROUTE BY SEEING DEFINITEIVLY WHAT HE CAN GET FROM OR THROUGH SYRIA)

4. HASSAN REACTED WELL TO THE IDEA OF PROLONGING THE CONTRACT
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SUSPENSE DATES. I ALSO TOLD HASSAN THAT FAHD PROBABLY WOULD NEED SOME TIME TO GET ALL OF HIS PROPORSAL FOR JORDAN APPROVED. WE ALSO TALKED ABOUT THE KINGS FIXATION WITH THE PHASED OR TRUNCATED APPORACH. I DINSTINGUISHED FOR HIM PHASED FUNDING WHICH DID NOT NECESSARILY REQUIRE A TRUNCATED APPORACH FROM CUTTING DOWN THE DEAL AND HE SEEMED TO THINK SUCH MADE SENSE. WHAT KING IS IN NEED OF ACCORDING TO HASSAN IS NOT A BIG CHECK NOW BUT SOME ASSURANCE THAT WHEN THE BILLS COME DUE FOR THE SYSTEM

THE SAUDIS OR SOMEONE ELSE IS WILLING TO PAY THEM IN ORDER TO AVOID GETTING A TRUNCATED SYSTEM BY DEFAULT AND WASTING A LOT OF TIME IN THE MEANWHILE. FURTHER I TOLD HASSAN THAT THE SECOND PHASE HAD NO FIRM COST FIXED TO IT AND THEREFORE WAS ONLY A SERIES OF ESTIMATES. IN THIS SENSE WE PROBABLY WOULD REQUIRE SOME MORE TIME TO WORK OUT DEFINITELY THOSE COSTS ANYWAY.

5. HASSAN IS OF COURSE THE MOST FAVORABLE OF ALL TO GETTING SOMETHING WORKED OUT. HE ALSO ADEED FOR ME THAT FAHD SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME TALKING TO HASSAN ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE KING GOING TO THE SOVIETS. HASSAN TAKES THIS NOT AS A SAUDI EFFORT TO TALK THE KING OUT OF SUCH AN IDEA BUT A GENUINE SIGH OF HOW EFFECTIVE WE AND THE KING HAVE BEEN IN MAKING SAUDIS SEE CLEARLY THAT THE KING WOULD GO TO THE SOVIETS IF THE SYSTEM OFFERED FALLS SO FAR BELOW HIS NEEDS AS TO BE UNACCEPTABLE TO HIM. PICKERING UNQUOTE SISCO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIR DEFENSE, TOSEC, MISSILES, MILITARY SALES, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE103893
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/ARN:TJCAROLAN:PDW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760163-0862
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976046/aaaaaety.tel
Line Count: 132
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 OCT 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2004 by izenbei0>; RELEASED <18 OCT 2004 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <05 NOV 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE -TALK WITH CROWN PRINCE
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, ACOM, JO, US, SA, UR, (HASSAN), (PORTER, WILLIAM J), (FAHD, PRINCE)
To: SECRETARY USCINCEUR
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006